

中英对照本

阴阳的哲学

〔美〕迈克尔·斯洛特 著

王江伟 牛纪凤 译

廖申白 校

The Philosophy of Yin and Yang

Michael Slote



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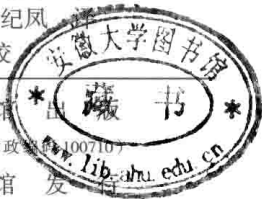
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Michael Slote

THE PHILOSOPHY OF YIN AND YANG
A Contemporary Approach

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致中国读者

Preface for Chinese Readers

This book, you will find, is somewhat unusual. I am a Western philosopher, based in the United States, who only in the later years of his academic career have become deeply interested in Chinese thought. And it was too late for me to learn Chinese or to train as what we call a sinologist. What I found, however, was that my own previous work in philosophy had led me away from typical Western philosophical assumptions and toward a Chinese way of seeing and understanding things. The more I learned about traditional Chinese thought, the more I saw or felt a need to integrate it with and incorporate it into my own philosophical thinking. The present book has been the result of this process.

My approach to and integration with Chinese thought has occurred in stages spread out over the past ten years. First, I became aware of an imbalance in Western thinking that no one had previously pointed out. For brevity, I like to say (though this can't literally be true) that Western thought has always been almost all yang and almost no yin. But this is how I put things now that I have seen the significance, or part of the significance, of the yin/yang complementarity for general philosophical purposes. When I first started criticizing Western philosophy as such, my concepts and terminology were different. I objected to the fact of the almost total emphasis, in Western thought, on rational control. And I began to argue that this emphasis has left the value and virtue of receptivity devalued and almost totally ignored within the Western philosophical tradition. You will see in what follows after this preface what I mean specifically by receptivity and rational control, but the important point for anyone who wishes to trace the origins of the present book is to realize that the first step consisted in seeing the imbalance of Western thought and its overemphasis on rationality and control. (Most Western philosophers have been rationalists, but such [extreme] rationalism is pretty much unknown in China.)

But, you may now ask, how does this lead toward the present book? The answer, and it is an answer that only with time, with years,

你们将会发现，这本书有点不同寻常。我是一名西方哲学家，扎根于美国，仅仅在学术生涯的晚年才开始对中国思想产生深挚的兴趣。对我来说，学习汉语或者接受训练成为一名我们所谓的汉学家都太晚了。然而，我发现，我自己之前在哲学方面的工作已经引导我远离了典型的西方哲学假定，并趋向于一种中国的看待和理解事物的方式。我对传统的中国思想了解得愈多，就愈是发现或感觉到需要将它与我自己的哲学思考相结合，使它融入我自己的哲学思考之中。眼前的这本书正是这一进程的成果。

我对中国思想的接近和结合发生于过去十年间铺展开来的各个阶段之中。首先，我觉察到了西方思想中的一种不平衡，之前还没有人指出过这种不平衡。简而言之，我想要说的是（尽管从字面上来看这并不正确），西方思想几乎一直都是阳，几乎没有阴。不过这是我现在的处理方式，因为我已经看到了这种阴 / 阳互补关系对于一般哲学目的的重要性。当我第一次开始对西方哲学提出这样的批评时，我的概念和术语有所不同。我对西方思想里所强调的几乎都是理性控制这一事实提出了抗议。我开始论证，这种强调贬低了接受性的价值和德性，且几乎在西方的哲学传统中完全忽视了它。在这篇序文之后，接下来你们将会看到我所说的接受性和理性控制的确切含义，但对于任何一个希望追溯眼前这本书的由来的人而言，重点是要意识到它的第一步就在于看到西方思想的这种不平衡及其对理性和控制的过度强调。（大多数西方哲学家都是理性主义者，但这样〔极端〕的理性主义在中国则差不多是人们闻所未闻的。）

然而，你们现在可能会问，这一点如何就引出了眼前的这本书？答案就是：接受性与理性控制之间的这种对立实际上与其说是一种对立，不如说是一种必不可少且不可分割的二元性、一种互补关

dawned on me, is that the opposition between receptivity and rational control is really not so much an opposition as a necessary and inseparable duality, a complementarity. And I eventually saw this complementarity as approximating to what, in some of its most philosophically significant aspects, has been thought about yin and yang and yin/yang in traditional Chinese thought and culture. Then next I saw that the yin/yang complementarity as I was understanding or updating it can be used to solve important philosophical problems. That is what the present book seeks to accomplish.

And it is fitting that it should be appearing in Chinese translation as it appears in English. It is going to be harder to get Western philosophers to acknowledge the philosophical significance of yin/yang than to do this with Chinese thinkers. The philosophical applications of yin and yang I make in the present book will, I think, seem quite new to Chinese readers, but I hope and believe they will be motivated to take the present project seriously because of the way it acknowledges the importance of a distinction that was originally made in China. Western philosophy has had no use for yin and yang and for the receptivity I urge as the equivalent, in English, of yin conceived as philosophically relevant. So the present book will likely be a harder sell in its English version among Western philosophers than it may turn out to be in its Chinese language version.

The fact that I, a Western philosopher, am publishing this book initially in Chinese is also significant. It constitutes, among other things, my acknowledgement of the importance of Chinese thinkers/philosophers on the present emerging, increasingly internationalized world stage of philosophy. I don't think anyone with my background has ever previously done such a thing, and what I am doing represents, I believe, a well-deserved compliment directed toward Chinese philosophy. Let's see whether this book can be as philosophically useful to all of you as I am hoping it can be.

Finally, let me acknowledge some of my debts. I want to thank Dr. Wang

系——我也是随着时间的推移、长年累月之后才渐渐地明白这一点的。我最终将这种互补关系看作接近于——在它最具哲学重要性的一些方面——在传统的中国思想和文化中对阴、阳和阴 / 阳所思考的内容。在这之后我又看到，我所理解或加以更新的这种阴 / 阳互补关系可以被用来解决重要的哲学问题。这正是眼前这本书力图完成的工作。

与之相称的是，它在以英文的形式面世之时，同时也应当以中文翻译的形式面世。让西方哲学家承认阴 / 阳在哲学上的重要性要比让中国思想家承认它困难得多。我想，我在眼前这本书里对阴与阳的哲学式运用对于中国读者来说将会显得相当新鲜，但我希望并且相信他们将会被激励着去严肃地对待眼前的这项规划，因为它以这种方式承认了最初由中国创造的一种区分的重要性。西方哲学不喜欢阴与阳，也不喜欢接受性这个我力主在英语中设想为在哲学含义上与阴同等的东西。因此，与眼前这本书的汉语版本最终可能产生的结果相比，在西方哲学家中推销它的英语版本将可能是更为困难的。

我，一个西方哲学家，一开始就以中文的形式来出版这本书——这一事实也是意味深长的。其他不论，它尤其构成了我对中国的思想家 / 哲学家在目前这个正在出现的、日益国际化了的世界哲学舞台上所具有的重要性的致谢。我认为，之前从未有与我一样背景的人做过这样一件事，而且我相信，我正在做的工作代表了对于中国哲学的一种理所应当的赞美。让我们看看这本书能否像我希望的那样给诸位带来哲学上有益的内容。

最后，请让我对我受到的一些帮助表达谢意。我想感谢王江伟博士和牛纪凤博士在翻译这本书的过程中所做的工作。他们两人我都认识，我对他们已经完成的工作抱有很大的信心。不过，我得到

Jiangwei and Dr. Niu Jifeng, for their work in translating the book. Knowing them both, I have great confidence in what they have done. My greatest debt, however, is to Professor Liao Shenbai, who not only supervised the translation but also arranged for its publication by The Commercial Press. And it was he who organized the lecture series I gave at Beijing Normal University that became the basis for the longer work that is appearing here. The present book owes him a great deal.

的最大的帮助来自廖申白教授，他不仅指导了这项翻译工作，还协商了它在商务印书馆的出版事宜，而且正是他组织了我在北京师范大学所做的系列讲座，后者成为了此处所呈现的这部篇幅更长的作品的基础。眼前的这本书从他那里受惠良多。

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序 言

Preface

Chinese thought—and not just Chinese philosophy—contains concepts whose philosophical importance has been underestimated even by the Chinese. The present book deals primarily with one of those concepts, the conceptual complementarity of yin and yang or, as many say, of yin/yang. There are three other such concepts, the notion of xin, or heart-mind, the notion of Dao, or the Way, and the notion of Tian or Heaven, whose significance has also been underestimated or misinterpreted; and later in this book I shall (at different times) bring in these notions as they relate to yin/yang. But let me now focus on our main subject, yin/yang.

Yin/yang is or involves a complementarity, but what I shall be saying here in this book is in an important way complementary to work I have done previously. And I should perhaps say “in important ways” because the present work is complementary in different ways to two distinct previous publications. My 2013 OUP book *From Enlightenment to Receptivity: Rethinking Our Values* (FETR) argued at considerable length that Western philosophical thought has on the whole overemphasized rational control at the expense of the countervailing and important virtue/value of receptivity. This was a lengthy indictment of almost all Western philosophy (certain sentimentalists being notable exceptions), and it was made clear that the criticisms being mounted against Western thinkers didn’t apply to Chinese thinkers. The idea of yin/yang did come in, but mainly in an effort to show that standard interpretations of yin don’t univocally treat it as equivalent to receptivity rather than passivity or pliability/pliancy.

By contrast, the present book focuses on what Chinese thought can positively do for all of us philosophers. And I say Chinese thought rather than Confucian thought because yin/yang is a notion that precedes Confucianism (as well as Daoism). FETR doesn’t really do any of this, but by criticizing Western thought as intensely as it does, it clears the way for what I am trying to do in the present book (and to a certain extent did in my previous book *A Sentimentalist Theory of the Mind* [OUP, 2014]).

中国思想——不仅仅是中国哲学——包含着一些概念，即使中国人也一直低估了这些概念的哲学重要性。眼前这本书主要论述这些概念中的一种，即阴与阳（或很多人所说的阴 / 阳）在概念层面上的互补关系。另外还有三种这样的概念：心（heart-mind）的概念、道（the Way）的概念和天（Heaven）的概念，它们的意义也一直被低估或者被误解了；由于它们与阴 / 阳有所关联，所以稍后在这本书中我将（在不同地方）引入这些概念。不过，现在请让我将注意力集中于我们的主题：阴 / 阳。

阴 / 阳是或者说包含着一种互补关系，而对于我之前已经做过的工作来说，我在这本书中将要论述的内容是以一种重要的方式对它们进行补充。或许我应当说“以多种重要的方式”，因为眼前这部作品是以不同的方式对我之前两部截然不同的出版物的补充。2013 年，我在牛津大学出版社出版了《从启蒙到接受性：我们的价值再思考》一书，其中非常详细地论证了西方哲学思想总体上一一直过于强调理性控制，而这是以忽略接受性这种与之相互抗衡同时也很重要的德性 / 价值为代价的。这是针对几乎所有西方哲学（某些情感主义者显然除外）的一份长长诉状，而针对西方思想家提出的这些批评显然并不适用于中国的思想家。虽然阴 / 阳的观念的确在那本书里出现过，但主要是用来表明：关于阴的标准性解释将阴与被动性或温顺 / 柔顺等同了起来，而没有明确地将其等同于接受性。

与之相比，眼前这本书关注的是，对我们所有的哲学家来说，中国思想能够提供什么积极的贡献。我之所以说中国思想而非儒家思想，是因为阴 / 阳是一个先于儒学（以及道家）的概念。《从启蒙到接受性》那本书实际上未曾着手这方面的工作，但是通过对西方思想的有力批评，它为我在眼前这本书中努力要做的工作（一定程度上也为我在上一本书《一种情感主义的心智理论》[牛津大学

More important, however, as part of the run up to the present book is an article “The Philosophical Reset Button: A Manifesto” that I published in *Dao* early in 2015. (A Chinese translation was published in May, 2015, in the *Academic Monthly*.) The article pointed to certain ways in which Chinese and especially Confucian thought isn’t subject to the excessive rationalism of standard Western philosophy, but it also addressed Chinese thinkers and urged them not to be modest about what their philosophical/cultural traditions can contribute to world philosophy. The Confucian tradition allows emotion an important role in central philosophical topics, and given the increase in philosophical influence that China and the Chinese are likely to exert globally in coming decades, the Chinese, I argued, are in a unique position to correct what I pointed to as problematic in traditional and present-day Western thought—this would be the pushing of the reset button mentioned in the title of the paper.

But notice, then, the contrast between what is said in that article and what I will be saying here in this book. Like FETR the “manifesto” article mostly focuses on what is wrong with Western thought and on how the Chinese have not gone wrong in the ways we have in the West. It doesn’t tell us at all specifically how Chinese thought can contribute to our understanding of particular philosophical problems or areas of inquiry. The manifesto article doesn’t propose any solution to the problems it finds in Western thought except for the very general (some may call it vague, but I was very specific about where Western thought goes wrong) proposal that it be less blinkered about the importance of empathy and emotion. The present book is much, much more specific. It attempts to show that the age-old yin/yang complementarity offers us an answer to the most central and fundamental questions we (Western, but also Eastern) philosophers face and have historically faced in ethics, epistemology, and the philosophy of mind. Yin/yang is arguably the “philosopher’s stone” for ongoing work in some of the most significant areas/parts of philosophy. And that metaphor, invoking